

# **INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION**

## **Minutes of the 1st Meeting of the 2004 Interim**

**August 9, 2004**

The first meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Education was held on Monday, August 9, 2004, at 1:30 PM, in Room 129 of the Capitol Annex. Representative Frank Rasche, Co-Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

Present were:

Members: Senator Lindy Casebier, Co-Chair; Representative Frank Rasche, Co-Chair; Senators Walter Blevins, Brett Guthrie, David K. Karem, Vernie McGaha, R.J. Palmer II, Dan Seum, Gary Tapp, and Jack Westwood; Representatives Buddy Buckingham, Hubert Collins, Jon Draud, Ted "Teddy" Edmonds, C.B. Embry Jr, Tim Feeley, Derrick Graham, Mary Harper, Mary Lou Marzian, Reginald Meeks, Harry Moberly, Russ Mobley, Rick Nelson, Tom Riner, Charles Siler, Arnold Simpson, Kathy Stein, Jim Thompson, and Charles Walton.

Guests: Kristen Hoffman; Kathy Lousignont, Partners for Kentucky's Future; Tim Eaton, Pulaski County Schools; Clyde Caudill, Jefferson County Public Schools; Ken Hines, Kentucky Education Association; Jennifer Carroll, Kentucky Department of Education; Roland Haun, Kentucky Association of School Superintendents; Paul Blanchard, Eastern Kentucky University; and Gail Wells, Northern Kentucky University.

LRC Staff: Audrey Carr, Jonathan Lowe, Janet Stevens, Jeff Adamson, Jake Eaton, and Lisa Moore.

Representative Rasche recognized a visiting delegation from the Department of State, The International Delegation of Journalists from Northern Africa, specifically Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco. He also reminded members about the notice in their folders about the Civics Summit to be held on Tuesday, October 5, at Northern Kentucky University (NKU).

Representative Rasche asked Representative Thompson to give an update of the Subcommittee on Elementary and Secondary Education meeting. Representative Thompson said there was a discussion of two bills that were passed during the 2004 Session. He said House Bill 178 allows students an opportunity to complete a General Education Diploma (GED) while still enrolled in high school. In April 2004, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) approved the creation of the state approved secondary GED prep program. He said KBE has not given final approval of the program,

but Mr. Kevin Noland, Deputy Commissioner, and Ms. Starr Lewis, Associate Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), reported the progress to date.

Representative Thompson said the Educational Professional Standards Board (EPSB) gave an update on the two-year pilot program studying the teacher intern process. He said the subcommittee also discussed House Bill 402 (2002), which requires the Interim Joint Committee on Education to study the effectiveness and efficiency of the teacher and principal intern programs.

Representative Rasche asked Senator Westwood to give an update on the Subcommittee on Postsecondary Education meeting. Senator Westwood said Mr. Tom Layzell, President, Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), presented the 2004 strategic planning process. Senator Westwood said since 1998, the CPE's work has been guided by a document called 2020 Vision: The Public Agenda for Kentucky's System of Postsecondary Education. This document was based on the provisions of House Bill 1 (1997), and is now about six years old. Consequently, the CPE is undertaking a comprehensive review and update of the public agenda, and the companion action agenda during this interim. President Layzell also discussed a comprehensive review of the funding model used for postsecondary education in Kentucky, which needs to be completed prior to the development of the 2006-2008 budget recommendation.

Senator Westwood said Dr. Gary Ransdell, President, Western Kentucky University, and Dr. Gail Wells, Vice President and Provost for Northern Kentucky University, provided their views of the funding model from the institutional perspective. Dr. Mary Sias, President, Kentucky State University (KSU), also provided her perspective on KSU's current status, and her aspirations and vision for the future of the institution.

Representative Rasche said he and Senator Casebier wanted to discuss the 2004 workplan with the members. He said it was important for all the members to be aware of the status of Kentucky education, preschool through adult, in terms of the goals that have been set by the General Assembly. He said it is important to understand the progress that has been made, but more importantly, to recognize challenges that are ahead to meet the educational needs of Kentucky's citizens. Representative Rasche said this can be accomplished by listening to practitioners, and by seeing programs in action, which explains the site visits listed in the workplan. He said the education showcase held earlier today was an opportunity for members to learn about some unique, educational approaches to address specific educational concerns. He thanked the showcase participants for taking time from their schedules to come to Frankfort, and for a job well done.

Senator Casebier said there were many new members on the Education Committee who have come since most educational reforms were implemented. He said as a teacher

in 1990, he voted against the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). After leaving the classroom and entering into administration in Jefferson County, he was provided the opportunity to tour most schools, and easily saw where KERA was working and where it was not. He said a key to KERA working in a school is determined by the leader in the building. He referred to Ms. Peggy Petrilli, Principal, Northern Elementary School, and the tremendous job she has done with the at-risk population of students in her school. She has provided excellent leadership with the selection and placement of faculty, and by implementing curriculum to reach the students and bring them to levels once thought impossible.

Senator Casebier said all the leaders in the Oldham County school system have embraced the components of KERA, and the school district has some of the highest test scores in the state. He said Kentucky is on a journey from 1990 to 2014, and encouraged the members to educate themselves on what it is going to take to complete the journey. He urged the members as they listen to their constituents, to always do what is best for the children, and not the adults.

Representative Rasche said 2004 needs to be viewed as the new baseline to see what it is going to take to accomplish Kentucky's goals set for 2014 and 2020. He urged members to keep the future in mind during this interim. He thanked all the Kentuckians who have worked so hard to get Kentucky to the point it is today.

Representative Rasche introduced Mr. Kevin Noland and Ms. Linda France, Deputy Commissioners, KDE, who made a presentation on Kentucky's education progress and the challenges ahead. Mr. Noland said Commissioner Wilhoit regretted not being there, but had longstanding commitments in Butler and McCracken Counties to help with opening school celebrations. The presentation will include a short video from Commissioner Wilhoit.

Mr. Noland said members should have a handout, "Results Matter". This document is a statistical update on Kentucky's education system and will include topics such as: high poverty/high achievement; program implementation; measure of student achievement on Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS); other measures of achievement (non-academic data); professional development in the schools; leadership development; and reading and literacy grants.

Ms. France said Kentucky has many inter-related programs that complement and support the other. She said Extended School Services (ESS) is a program that provides support for students who need extra help to achieve academic success. The Family Resource and Youth Services Centers (FRYSCs) work to remove non-academic and social obstacles to student success. The preschool program, which works collaboratively with Headstart and other programs, to prepare the youngest, at-risk children for primary school. The primary program, which encourages schools to meet the variant needs of

individual students through multiability grouping, and other critical attributes that the General Assembly defined. Ms. France discussed professional development for teachers and administrators, school-based decision making, which places decision making into the hands of teachers and parents at the local school level, and education technology, which provides equal access throughout the state to various resources.

Mr. Noland gave a report with specific data concerning certain programs. He said ESS has helped 259,000 Kentucky public elementary and secondary students, and at least 21,000 students had less failing grades after completing the ESS program.

Senator Tapp asked about the increase in students served by ESS from 2001-2002 to 2002-2003. Mr. Noland said the General Assembly enacted a bill several years ago that enabled a pilot program for schools to use ESS funds during the regular school day, instead of after school hours thus accounting for the increase of students participating. This particularly attracted many high school students who could not stay after school due to jobs or extracurricular activities.

Senator Tapp said even after the increase in students participating, the 2002-2003 schools operated ESS with \$3 million dollars less than funds it had allocated for ESS in 2001-2002. He said that the schools were either doing a better job with less money, or Kentucky schools were not doing such a good job before. Mr. Noland said the reason is that the school districts did not have to use part of the ESS money for transportation when ESS is offered during the school day.

Mr. Noland gave an update on the Kentucky Education Technology System. Originally, the goal in the early 1990's was to have one computer for every six students. Currently, there is one computer for every four students with every teacher having his/her own computer. He said one goal for Kentucky was to switch over to on-line testing in an effort to get quicker turnaround on test scores. However, Mr. Noland said that most computers are now outdated, with 75 percent operating on Windows 95/98, which does not have the capacity to support on-line testing.

Mr. Noland said Kentucky is serving 30,000 children in the preschool Headstart program. This program serves children who are four years old and classified as at-risk, or have a disability. He said some districts also serve other children not classified in the two categories he mentioned.

Mr. Noland said the Education Commission of the States (ECS) recognized Kentucky as one of the five states on track to reach all 40 implementation goals of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB).

Mr. Noland said the General Assembly made school councils a requirement in 1990 for each school district by the year 1996, and this has happened in Kentucky. The

net result is 6,000 parents and teachers are involved in their schools in terms of policy making, whether it involves personnel or curriculum.

Mr. Noland said the final program to highlight is the FRYSCs, which have been implemented in more than 1,100 of the Kentucky public elementary and secondary schools. This program spends a vast amount of time preparing children to learn by buying them clothes, buying food, or providing social or medical services to the children in an effort to help the child learn and perform better in school.

Ms. France discussed student performance in areas of the state with high poverty. There is evidence that children in high poverty levels can succeed at high learning levels in elementary, middle, and the high school level. At the high school level, however, it is more difficult, and the results are less positive.

Representative Draud asked if there are data available on high poverty high school students achieving at high levels. Ms. France said there are a few outlined on page 17 and 18 of the "Results Matters" handout, but she said the counts are not as accurate at the high school level because students are reluctant to fill out the free and reduced lunch forms.

Mr. Noland discussed the measures of student achievement in Kentucky. He said CATS scores show academic progress in every subject and every grade, and all demographic groups in Kentucky schools are performing better today than in 1990. He said scores are rising at a greater rate at the elementary level than they are at the middle school and high school levels. Writing scores indicate that Kentucky's emphasis on writing and writing portfolios is paying off. This is evidenced by: 1) elementary school writing has shown dramatic improvements, with an increase of 16 points from 1999 to 2003; 2) middle school writing scores have climbed more than 12 points from 1999 to 2003; and 3) high school writing scores have risen more than 8 points during the same period. Mr. Noland said high school arts & humanities scores have climbed more than 16 points from 1999 to 2003.

Ms. France discussed the measures of student achievement in Kentucky. She said 73 percent of graduating students took the ACT test in 2003, compared with only 63 percent in 1995. This indicates that students have a greater interest in postsecondary education than they have in the past. Similarly, more Kentucky high school students are taking Advanced Placement courses and tests, and scoring higher than ever on those tests.

Ms. France said that Kentucky's scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), which is administered as students exit the primary program, and in the 6th and 9th grades, are improving, and at a faster rate at the elementary level than in the 6th and 9th grades. She also said the Kentucky National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading scores have made very impressive gains compared to the rest of the

nation, and 4th and 8th grade mathematics NAEP scores have risen nearly 20 points from 1992 to 2003.

Senator Karem asked if the KDE has ever focused on why the students in Jefferson County, which have 18 or 20 percent of the state's enrollment, seem to perform at high levels in the high schools, and perform poorly at the elementary schools. Ms. France said Dr. Daschner, Superintendent of Jefferson County Public Schools, has initiated some tremendous initiatives in reading focusing at the early primary level. She hopes this focus will start to make a huge difference in the test schools at the elementary school level in Jefferson County. She also said Jefferson County has tremendous challenges. Senator Karem said the top four counties performing the highest in the reading index in elementary schools, are above the 50 percent free and reduced lunch levels, which he said is a challenge, and that Jefferson County should not be given any slack for having challenges. Ms. France said Dr. Daschner is concerned about student achievement, and is examining the data closely. Senator Karem asked how the other four counties mentioned earlier achieved such dramatic success. Ms. France said intense focus within the schools and embracing literacy concepts have made these schools successful.

Representative Graham said the CTBS reading scores are soaring at the elementary levels, but not doing as well in the middle and high schools. He asked what they are doing at the elementary level to score so high that is not happening in the middle and high schools. Ms. France said it goes back to intentional focus. She said after the 3rd grade, there tends to be less focus on literacy and more on academic core content. She said through grades 4-12, students still need concentrated focus on reading and understanding content.

Representative Graham asked if Kentucky is focused on getting students ready to test well, or focused on making them lifelong learners. He said most anything is possible for students to learn as long as they can read. He also asked why the students, faculty, and staff are not the first people told about test results. He said many teachers around the Commonwealth cannot get the test results until after they are released to the press. Mr. Noland said staff should be receiving the test results to review two weeks prior to the media press release. He will remind the school district assessment coordinators about the ability to share this information with the teachers.

Representative Thompson commented that members should not lose sight that there are 200 high schools in the state so it is less competitive to get into the top 20 schools than the elementary schools who have 1,100 schools in the state. Ms. France said the KDE prefers not to rank schools, but the top 20 were compiled today to show the correlation between high poverty and high performance.

Representative Draud said school districts are receiving the test scores two weeks in advance of the press receiving the information. He said it could be that superintendents or principals in certain districts are holding the data for some reason, but there should be an adequate amount of time for the test scores to be shared with the teachers.

Mr. Noland discussed the non-academic data in Kentucky schools. He said more Kentucky graduates are successfully making the transition to adult life by moving on to some sort of postsecondary education or employment - 95.7 percent in 2002, compared to 92.6 percent in 1993. The percentage of graduates who failed to enter the workforce or continue their education has fallen from 7.4 percent to 4.3 percent between 1993 and 2002, and the dropout rate is showing a downward trend, falling 1.12 points since 1993.

Senator Blevins asked if the KDE was looking at different ways to operate the free and reduced lunch programs in the high school so that students would not have to worry about the stigma attached because no one would know who was using it. Mr. Noland said the KDE has worked with the United States Department of Agriculture who have given them ideas on how to make using the program more discreet, but students are pretty astute at catching on to who is using the free and reduced lunch program. Ms. France said Kentucky is looking at systems where once a family applies for free and reduced lunch, they will be in the system, and will not have to keep reapplying. Mr. Noland explained that the United States Congress through the Child Nutrition Act recently made that change so that the schools are not constantly having to check with the family. The information is obtained one time for the entire school year. Ms. France also said that schools across the state are implementing technology where students punch in a number to pay for their lunch, and no one can tell if they are paying or receiving free and reduced lunches.

Representative Draud said the high schools should cross-reference with the elementary school children in order to get more accurate data. He said it looks as if no high poverty high schools are performing at high levels.

Senator McGaha asked if once a family qualified for this new free and reduced lunch program, were they were always qualified. Ms. France said only for one school year. Mr. Noland said the free and reduced lunch is a federal program, and only recently has Congress amended the law to allow states to check it once a year.

Ms. France said the KDE offers a number of leadership initiatives to better prepare superintendents and other educational leaders. Several of these programs are run in partnership with other education organizations. She said the Minority Superintendent Intern Program stands out this year because one of its three participants, Elaine Farris, on July 1 became Kentucky's first African-American school superintendent.

Ms. France said the State Action for Education Leadership Project (SAELP) II initiative is in its second round of funding provided through the Wallace Foundation. This program is working on three breakthrough ideas including: 1) establish a statewide leadership development system from pre-service preparation to on-going professional development; 2) develop a teacher leadership initiative where the leadership is distributed across the school, and not just in the principal's office; and 3) establish a public policy forum to provide a "think tank" group that would make recommendations for ways to improve leadership development.

Representative Meeks asked how many participants were in the Leadership Administrative Institute. Ms. France said there were six participants, and said she would have to get him the information on how many of those have been placed. She said one of the three participants in the Minority Superintendent Intern Program had been placed, and that was Elaine Farris in Shelby County. Representative Meeks asked about the other two participants. Ms. France said that Anthony Sanders had accepted a position as a Title I GAP coordinator with the KDE, and the other has returned to her home district and plans to apply for a superintendency, but it has not worked out for her at this time.

Mr. Noland discussed professional development for teachers. He said Kentucky has trained more than 5,000 teachers in subject-specific content and instructional techniques over the last six years in a series of teacher academies. Professional development allocations have for the past nine years remained at \$23 per average daily attendance. He said the Teachers' Professional Growth Fund, which the General Assembly established in 2000 to help teachers better understand content and instruction, has served nearly 3,300 educators since its inception.

Representative Feeley asked about statistics or a report on the effectiveness of the alternative certification that was established over the last couple of legislative sessions. Mr. Noland asked if there was a representative from the Education Professional Standards Board (EPSB) who could answer the question. Mr. Phil Rogers, EPSB, said it has been effective with retention rates as high as in the traditional programs. He said the option used most is bringing in folks who have a bachelor's degree in the area they are teaching, and then they have three years to go to school while they work.

Representative Mobley asked what consideration is given to school size when compiling the list of the top 20 schools. Ms. France said school size was not factored in for this comparison. Representative Mobley wondered if it should have been. Ms. France said the KDE did not think so because of the way the academic index is calculated, however she said she would be happy to break it down to see if size does factor in.

Ms. France discussed reading and literacy grants. She said several programs are aimed at improving Kentucky's literacy by strategically allocating state funds and/or



taking advantage of federal funding opportunities. These include the federal Even Start program, which since 1998 has served 32,000 students with nearly \$13 million for literacy programs. Kentucky's Early Reading Incentive Grant Program, which was created by the General Assembly in 1998, has served 32,000 students with more than \$20 million in lottery-generated funds. The federal Reading First program will provide \$13.7 million each year for the next six years for high quality reading instruction at the primary level. The KDE has awarded Reading First grants to 74 elementary schools in 42 districts.

Commissioner Wilhoit made a presentation to the members via a video broadcast. He said he participated in summer meetings with education leaders in the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), ECS, and the U.S. Department of Education, and all groups recognize Kentucky as being a leader in state education, against which other states benchmark education improvement. He also said that all states now realize the critical role education will play in the future, and many are taking aggressive steps to advance themselves. For example, Oklahoma and Virginia have committed to universal preschool, Virginia voted over one billion additional dollars to elementary and secondary education, and South Carolina has had the most dramatic improvements in math achievement.

Commissioner Wilhoit discussed specific strategies Kentucky should take in order for all Kentucky schools to be at proficiency or beyond by 2014. He said attention should be devoted to the following areas: 1) enhancing student performance; 2) maintaining high quality teaching and administration; 3) and continuing to support Kentucky's educational enterprise.

Commissioner Wilhoit believes that Kentucky needs to improve its current assessment and accountability system. He has held preliminary discussions with the Education Assessment and Accountability Review Subcommittee (EAARS) about improvements, including upgrading and aligning standards, improving the writing process with a focus on redesign of the writing portfolio, using technology versus paper and pencil to administer and report results, reducing the turnaround time between testing and providing results, bringing the test scoring to Kentucky and paying Kentucky teachers to score, and incorporating student accountability and end-of-course exams for local use at the high school level. The changes can be carried out while supporting the NCLB design and rollout.

Commissioner Wilhoit said Kentucky must do much more to assure opportunity for all students to obtain a world-class education. He proposed the following be a part of the work: 1) Protect the definition of what constitutes a world-class education. Expecting less of Kentucky's students in this emerging world will sell them short; 2) Continue to refine support on work in reading and math, but do not narrow the focus to the point that Kentucky forgets its progress in the arts and the need to increase student competencies in

world languages, as well as maintaining the expectations for knowledge and skills in social studies, sciences, and technology; 3) Persist with the preschool messages of adequate financial support, a solid early identification system in every school, and quality programming experiences for all youngsters; 4) Continue progress in reading as evidenced by NAEP and CATS results, and monitor the use of new resources to support these efforts, while moving the mathematics agenda in a similar way; 5) Take specific steps to assure a rigorous and relevant high school experience for all students including graduation requirements, reaching and preventing dropouts, infuse end-of-course assessments, energize the individual graduation plan, strengthen workforce connections, merge elementary and secondary with higher education resources, and make the high schools experience more relevant to career options and workforce realities; 6) Reach an agreement on Kentucky's comprehensive school health program; 7) Be responsible to continue advancements to eliminate Category 5 facilities and ensure all children and faculty attend safe schools; and 8) Revive conversations about youth service and the concept of service learning.

Commissioner Wilhoit said Kentucky must focus on high quality teaching and administration. Kentucky's efforts in this area, will depend, in large part, on how well it partners within the state. The Education Cabinet can be a resource for new conversations. The EPSB is considering ways to assure the PRAXIS criteria are rigorous, making sure the induction into teaching is positive and expanding the pool of teachers through second career options and other incentives. He said the KDE and the higher education institutions must support their efforts with more aggressive recruitment strategies, and with the support of the future educator initiative. The KDE will continue to advise the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority as they seek more effective ways to provide financial assistance to educators. Higher education institutions must lead the efforts to improve the pre-service experiences. All of this is necessary to have meaningful and productive P-16 conversations. A consistent voice across all institutions and organizations is mandatory as Kentucky develops ways to expand opportunities for prospective teachers.

Commissioner Wilhoit said the KBE and the KDE have primary responsibility in two areas. First, both agencies must help the legislature explore ways to competitively compensate teachers. The Governor has set as a goal to reach parity in pay with surrounding states. To reach this goal will require more than incremental increases. Most likely, it will take more than one biennium to accomplish the goal, and the target will be ever-changing because other states are continuously increasing their pay scales. The harsh truth is that we continue to decline in relative position to other states, the latest American Federation of Teachers ranking has Kentucky at 37th.

Commissioner Wilhoit asked the legislature to consider conversations about differentiated compensation. The KDE has taken small steps by providing additional support to teachers preparing for achieving the National Board for Professional Teaching

Standards. He said a number of national organizations have challenged states to explore compensation tied to unique responsibilities such as teacher mentors, content coaches, and lead teachers, placement in high poverty or low performing schools, unique skills in shortage areas, and performance in the classroom. Commissioner Wilhoit said that Kentucky has support legislation and pilot projects as a starting point for work in this arena. Providing compensation tied to these areas will not be without controversy, legitimate concerns, and opposition.

Commissioner Wilhoit said the KDE will continue to work with higher education to align and coordinate delivery of high quality experiences. It will be important to find ways to link experiences to student learning results.

Commissioner Wilhoit said leadership efforts should be targeted on both instructional support and efficient use of resources. Many administrators have asked for greater flexibility. In response, the KDE has eliminated or reduced regulations and have opened the conversation about moving some of the KERA strand line items into the Support Education Excellence in Kentucky (SEEK) program.

Commissioner Wilhoit said Kentucky must continue efforts to provide the technology infrastructure necessary to support the work in the schools and districts, and to manage state functions. He said Kentucky is close to full implementation of the STI and MUNIS systems, but upgrades and improved supports are needed. Also, the individual student identifier numbers are about to be implemented that will provide the basis for moving the state enterprise data system forward. This will need constant guidance and adjustment.

Commissioner Wilhoit said conversations have begun with the higher education community about the development of a statewide curriculum for educational leadership and engaged in conversations with the EPSB about new credentials for leaders. As part of the SAELP, Kentucky is considering several improvements, including the development of a teacher leader credential that is focused on accumulation of content expertise, combining university and district resources, and offering compensation for persons placed in teacher leader positions. He said perhaps Kentucky should consider a two-step principal licensure system that includes initial and performance-based licenses.

Commissioner Wilhoit has asked the state board to work with KDE to develop a fiscal efficiency review, based on national standards and measures. The review could be used to help districts measure themselves against benchmark practices across the country. It is a way to assure policymakers and citizens that Kentucky is efficiently using public resources, but will need sufficient resources to deliver the program to schools.

Commissioner Wilhoit said that Kentucky needs to evaluate and adjust its efforts to turn around low performing schools in light of NCLB. He said more schools will be

identified, more pressure will be placed on the Highly Skilled Educator program, and new procedures will need to be implemented to perform state oversight responsibilities.

Commissioner Wilhoit said achievement gaps still persist. Kentucky lost an outreach arm when the regional service centers were eliminated. To compensate, he established five achievement gap coordinator positions to broker the entire state. He said KDE continues to work with the seven minority student achievement districts who educate 73 percent of Kentucky's African American students, who are showing positive results at the elementary level, and have put into place several interventions that have promise.

Commissioner Wilhoit said Kentucky must continue to find ways to communicate and involve parents. Schools must adopt the individual graduation plans for students. This plan is developed in middle school by students, parents, and teachers. It sets goals and serves as a passport to the next level of learning. It should be a valuable resource for parents and students as they navigate learning and interact with educators. KDE is in the process of linking this tool to the "Go Higher" initiative to link all parents and children to expanded educational opportunities.

Commissioner Wilhoit said Kentucky needs to continue the analyses of support programs in light of their impact on student learning. The FRYSCs, ESS, and community education must be maximized in these difficult fiscal times.

Commissioner Wilhoit said the SEEK formula must be referenced when talking about support systems. Districts have been asked to operate without substantial increases for the last three years, and there is an adequacy lawsuit sitting in court that has behind it three studies validating the shortage of resources. In order of financial needs, Kentucky needs to continue to support SEEK increases, increase early childhood education funding, and invest in the solid, but aging and limited technology infrastructure.

Commissioner Wilhoit said he has proposed a very aggressive agenda that will require best thoughts and tremendous energy. He is counting on legislative members to provide policy direction, and appreciates the legacy of their support. He pledged the full support of the KBE and KDE as everyone works together to improve the lives of the next generation.

Representative Draud said KDE deserves credit for outstanding leadership. He asked if it was realistic to achieve the education goals set for 2014 without adequate funding. Mr. Noland mentioned that Daviess and Oldham Counties are already achieving the goal, while many other schools are on-line to do so. It is not an impossible goal, but Kentucky needs adequate resources in order for all schools to reach proficiency by 2014.

Representative Rasche introduced Mr. Tim Eaton, Superintendent, Pulaski County Schools; and Mr. Roger Marcum, Superintendent, Marion County Schools, to give observations from practitioners. Mr. Eaton said that KERA is working, and thanked Senator Casebier and Senator Karem for their hard work on education reform. Mr. Eaton said that school districts have consolidated improvement plans, which are key road maps to enhancing student achievement. He mentioned that student assessment results would be a much more effective tool for improving instruction if the results were delivered on a more timely basis.

Mr. Eaton said complying with the portfolio piece of assessment has been very challenging. He said though intended to be a selection of the student's best writing in a three to four year period, teachers have instead guided students to write and re-write pieces for the portfolio, rather than to provide instruction on improving overall writing skills as a method of expression.

Mr. Eaton said preschool and kindergarten in Pulaski County are all day commitments, which has led to higher reading scores and positives at the primary level.

Mr. Marcum said he was concerned about school facilities and keeping them in good condition. He also expressed concerns about retaining teacher quality, and recruiting new teachers.

Representative Rasche introduced Ms. Virginia Fox, Secretary, Education Cabinet. She discussed Reorganization Order #2004-725, which relates to the reorganization of the Workforce Development Cabinet, Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet and Education Cabinet.

Secretary Fox said that Section I of the Executive Order abolishes the Workforce Development Cabinet, and transfers the following entities to the Education Cabinet: 1) Statewide Independent Living Council; 2) Statewide Council for Vocational Rehabilitation; 3) Foundation for Workforce Development; 4) Unemployment Insurance Commission; 5) Kentucky Workforce Investment Board; 6) Kentucky Department for the Blind State Rehabilitation Council; 7) Kentucky Technical Education Personnel Board; 8) Client Assistance Program; and 9) Foundation for Adult Education.

Secretary Fox said that Section II of the Executive Order abolishes the Education, Arts and Humanities Cabinet, and transfers the following entities to the Education Cabinet: 1) the Department of Education and the Kentucky Board of Education; 2) Department for Libraries and Archives; 3) Kentucky Education Television (KET); 4) Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing; 5) Governor's Scholars Program; 6) Board of Directors for the Center for School Safety; 7) Kentucky Environmental Education Council; and 8) Martin Luther King Commission. It also transfers the following entities to the Commerce Cabinet: 1) Kentucky Arts Council; 2)

Kentucky Historical Society; 3) Kentucky Center for the Arts; 4) Kentucky Craft Marketing Program; 5) Governor's School for the Arts; 6) Kentucky African-American Heritage Council; and 7) Kentucky Foundation for the Arts. The last entity transferred from the Education Cabinet to the Finance and Administration Cabinet is the Kentucky Teachers' Retirement System Board of Trustees.

Secretary Fox said Section III of the Executive Order creates the Education Cabinet, and Section IV abolishes the Department for Adult Education and Literacy and transfers its duties to the Council on Postsecondary Education. She said Section V abolishes the Office of Early Childhood Development, Office of the Governor, and transfers its duties to the Department of Education. She said Section VI transfers the organizational units of the Workforce Development Cabinet, and the Education, Arts, and Humanities Cabinet to the Education Cabinet, while Section VII abolishes the organizational units within the Council on Postsecondary Education.

Secretary Fox referred members to Handout "A" and Handout "B" in their folders. These are informational items that reflect the proposed organizational charts of the newly created Education Cabinet.

The committee did not take action on Reorganization Order #2004-725. With no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.